

Coon Rapids  
Enterprise  
Coon Rapids, IA  
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## 108 What is a Great Place?

Great Places is a Vilsack-Pederson Administration initiative designed to promote bold thought and innovation to cultivate the unique and authentic qualities that make places in Iowa so special. Governor Vilsack's Great Places legislation calls on state agencies to focus financial and technical resources, and to identify ways to package together resources under their control into a competitive effort to be awarded to Great Places.

Early this year, it was announced that a Great Places Advisory Board would select three pilot Great Places. And in July, 145 groups in Iowa asked to be Great Places candidates. As part of the selection process, each group would be required to deliver an on-site presentation to members of the Great Places Advisory Board, explaining why their particular place would make a great place.

These presentations involved long and exhaustive preparations. Each of the Great Places applicants were asked to present their offers in context of seven dimensions. And they had to propose projects in which the state of Iowa could partner in order to bring greatness to their vision. Ultimately, less than 75 of the original applicants managed to prepare well enough to go ahead with the on-site presentation. But one who did was the Coon Rapids-Whiterock Great Place Planning Team.

The CR-Whiterock Team, led by Doug Carpenter and Rachel Garst and a host of other community leaders, has done a superb job preparing our Great Place offer. A well written 75 page book detailing the CR-Whiterock proposal is available at the Coon Rapids Library.

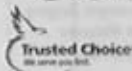
The three 'pilot' Great Place winners will be announced October 11.

If chosen, we can expect many of Iowa's 18 state agencies to focus its resources towards our great place, and identify ways to package together the financing necessary to accomplish our vision. At the very least, it means tens of thousands of grant dollars for CR-Whiterock's Great Place. And even if not chosen, the process still gives the state a preview of what 'our place' wants to achieve in the near future, which will help state agencies better prepare and plan for programming and funding needs.

We salute the CR-Whiterock Great Place Planning Team. Their efforts will keep our place on the right track – and perhaps the fast track, towards being an even Greater Place! And that is a benefit to all of us!!!



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